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**James A. Lee**

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there is but one heart and one voice in us all. Differing as we may in our geographical and other local sympathies, some of us with heads whitened and brows furrowed with care, others with the bounding pulse of opening manhood, and our professional pursuits as various as can be chosen in this great land of freedom, we are all the same, we are one, in love for our venerable *Alma*. Other bonds which we have long since formed, if not rudely severed, may have been gradually unloosed; other recollections, once cherished with vestal care, may be now forgotten or unwelcome; but who of us would ever willingly forget his college life? what can rend, while life continues, the bond that unites us to this institution? Yes, tie after tie may be ruptured; but is there not for each of us "a threefold cord" that shall never be broken,—that which binds us to the altars of our God, to the hearths of our fathers, and to the halls of Yale? Brethren, once more would I cordially greet you all.

And speak I not your united voice, when I specially wish all happiness and honor to the *officers* of our loved institution? Their venerated head and two of his associates have guided us almost universally along the paths of science; and many of the remainder who are walking worthily by their side, look down on the large majority of our assembly as their pupils. Peculiar indeed are the relations of the president and the professor to the pupil. What heart will not respond in its consciousness to my own, when affirming that the instructors of my youth ever appear to me on coming hither, to be unchanged, to be my instructors still! The great men of my early days have been often subsequently contracted into quite moderate dimensions; senators, governors, and even functionaries still more august, whose claims upon my respect were

once heartily conceded, seem not now always to merit more than official honor. Yes, even the wise and the good, whose counsels were once deemed infallible, have lost their infallibility; they do not always command my implicit deference. But when once come hither, the youth is father to the man, and the teachers of my academic days continue, as it were, my teachers still.

Nor are such feelings to be esteemed, by those who share them not, the mere reviving of youthful impressions long dormant, but now awakened for the moment into vigorous life by the power of the *genius loci*. It is not the mere law of association, the simple linking of the past with the present, as we walk along these ancient halls, that can thus call for a response from every heart. Were this the explanation, our emotions would have undiminished freshness, had a corps of literary Vandals usurped the seats of these respected officers, and our honored *Alma*, instead of retaining her lofty station, sunk into decrepitude and contempt. Such feelings, even in the eldest of us, may have much of the ardor of youth, but they are still rational and manly only. We have not come hither from every region of a country as large as southern Europe, to revive for the moment a few youthful impulses of which we are to be heartily ashamed as we return homeward. Each of us can distinctly and fearlessly assign a reason for uniting in these gratulations. The institution from whose walls, and wearing whose honors, we went forth two years, and five years, and fifteen, and thirty, and fifty, and sixty years since, we now revisit; and she is still the same in all that once gave her a title to our love and honor. She is the same, or, if changed, she has but strengthened her claims upon the hearts of her sons, by her steadfast advancement for half a century, as a great

nursery of science and usefulness. We remember her as she long since was; we have watched her in her gradual and vigorous progress, and we now rejoice in what she has become and what she is. The collegiate school has become a prosperous college, and the college has grown into a university in every thing but the name. During the last forty years her corps of professors has been quadrupled, her students in all departments have been nearly trebled, the course of studies anterior to the Bachelor's degree has been advanced two years, and her buildings have become almost a distinct quarter of this growing city. Yale is still essentially the same, and yet her growth has been so rapid and vigorous, that the Alumnus of 1804, who now reappears here for the first time, will look around him bewildered, and will scarcely recall in any object his ancient home. Yale is indeed changed, but she is still the nursery of sound learning, still a school of healthy discipline and subordination, still an institution consecrated, as from the very beginning, to Christ and the church.

And how refreshing is it, brethren, to withdraw for the time from the great world of constant change and tumult without, and to come hither to this inner region of stability and peace! In the political and commercial atmosphere, if we see not at any particular season a tempest raging, we are rarely without the signs of its speedy approach. Our religious hemisphere, which should be ever serene and brightening, is also often overcast with clouds, if not thick with mists. But here the air seems pure and bracing. If a few exhalations rise, they soon disappear; if a thunder cloud passes rapidly over, its explosions but purify the atmosphere. We would be grateful to a kind Providence that, amid the ceaseless flux which appertains

to so many institutions and which often shakes some of the firmest pillars of the community, our colleges still remain unmoved; and we would fondly hope that for this institution particularly, the law of progress and permanence only has been ordained. Time has been bearing each of us onward in its rapid flight,—with many, buoyant manhood has given place to middle life,—and on others still, the decline of age is stealing; but when we return hither we perceive no decay, no weakness,—our Alma Mater in her vigorous maturity, has lost none of her youthful activity and freshness. Her children may die, but she lives and flourishes. *Esta perpetua!*

Nor are such wishes to be deemed romantic. A university, a college, is always founded with a view to perpetuity. The monarchs and the monks who established so many of these institutions in Europe during the dark ages, displayed the same wisdom here, as did the founders of the German and American colleges of the last two centuries. Both intended to establish nurseries of learning, not mainly for themselves and their own age, but for future and distant ages. A great literary institution is usually the growth of at least a century; its endowments must have been given by a long succession of benefactors; its system of discipline and study must have been long tried before it can be fully approved. Often have nations arisen and empires been founded, while a university has been ripening into healthy adolescence. But when once grown strong and stable, who can set limits to her influence? Its circles steadily enlarge like those of the lake's agitated surface, but, unlike the latter, they are the more distinct as they widen. Generations and centuries slowly succeed each other, and her light, as that of some lofty Pharos, streams onward over the whole vast



distance, cheering where all besides, it may be, was dark. Myriads and tens of myriads of minds that have never resorted to her halls, are indirectly moulded by her hand ; and whether her influence be, as a whole, for good or for evil, it is mighty and often resistless.

It is obviously then an important subject of inquiry, What is the system of university or collegiate training which has been adopted by any single institution, or which characterizes the institutions of any one nation, in distinction from those of others? It is asking, in effect, how can the literary mind of a great community, of a nation, be best formed and polished? Or, to present the subject particularly, the inquiry would at any time be seasonable, and, if I mistake not, it would be peculiarly appropriate to such an occasion as the present, How does the collegiate system of training which has been so long practiced at Yale, and which also generally prevails in the older American colleges, compare with such systems in the universities of other nations? What are its relative excellences, what its defects, what the changes which are practicable as well as desirable? These queries I propose now substantially to answer ; and the mode adopted will be, to consider the English and the German systems successively, and then to notice our own. I have specified but these two courses of university education in Europe, not on the principle of selection, but as those only which are at the present time so prominent and distinct as to be entitled to the name of systems. England and Germany are the only countries whose universities now possess a European celebrity ; the universities of Italy, so far as they still live, flourish in the fame of other centuries only ; and that of Paris has been so essentially modified, as scarcely to admit of a proper comparison. When thus

announcing the subject, all will perceive that the limits of the present Address restrict me to a notice of little more than its mere outline. Suffer me also to add, that no one can be more aware of the incompetence of the speaker to do justice to such a topic than himself.

The *English* system of collegiate training will be first considered; and when using such language—a system of training—I intend not a mere enumeration of the different branches of learning which are pursued, and of the particular authors which are studied, together with a description of the mode of teaching the individual student. These indeed are all essential to the system, but there are many influences also which so control its application, that its distinctive working can be never fully understood without a proper knowledge of both. One of these influences is the peculiar character of the university itself; another is found in the national temperament; another still is the relative national advancement in science. Evidently none of these should be overlooked in our present survey.

When an English youth first enters the walls of Oxford or Cambridge, the veneration for antiquity, which is a stronger feeling in an English than in any other European heart, is at once excited, and usually only to be strengthened through life. Oxford boasts, though with a doubtful right, the great name of Alfred as her founder; and should this claim be pronounced apocryphal, her existence as a kindred institution to the university of Paris can be authentically traced back as far as the beginning of the thirteenth century. Cambridge, the younger of the two, began soon after to attract notice, and from this era the student of either university can pursue its progress to the present time during six centuries. We are beginning to

speak of our "venerable Yale," made venerable by the lapse of a hundred and forty-three years; but each of the two great English schools has already existed more than six hundred years. Wycliffe and his followers found a refuge at Oxford nearly five centuries ago; her Theological School still stands as a splendid specimen of the architecture of the fourth Edward's reign, and her Christ Church Chapel, with its princely endowments, still attests the munificence of her Chancellor, Cardinal Wolsey. The colleges and halls, the public buildings and the libraries, the fellowships and the ecclesiastical livings, pertaining to each, are worthy of that noble nation, and are such as only a nation's munificence for ages could establish. But influences still more potent there press alike on the youngest student and on the oldest Fellow. The great men of the nation, with few exceptions, have been sent forth for the last four hundred years from the two universities. The scholars, the divines, the statesmen and the orators, the poets and the warriors of England, have been there matured. Their hand-writing is to be still read on the different college rolls; their busts adorn the alcoves, and their portraits look down from the lofty walls. There the imperial shades of Bacon, and Milton, and Newton, and Locke, appear, as it were, still to hover. Or if the student looks beyond the inner precincts of these institutions, he sees them securely resting on the throne, the aristocracy and the established church, as a fourth estate of the realm—all conscious that they stand and fall together. Breathing such an atmosphere, yielding to such influences, the English student, we should presume, could scarcely fail to be thoroughly educated, and the English system of training to be worthy of our own general adoption.

And every man who venerates learning, must also honor these universities as having been for ages the great lights of the British isles. Their contributions to science and to letters have been immense; their long roll of learned men is perhaps outnumbered by none other; and had they at any distant period been destroyed, England, instead of taking as she now does the very front rank, would have been probably but a third rate European power. English scholarship has been made till within the last few years the only standard of American scholarship, and the English course of education the only course with which even our own professors have been familiar. But when we affirm all this, we still leave almost unanswered the question, What is the English system of training?—we have said nothing as to its relative excellences or defects.

In commencing a direct answer to this question, I would observe, that the scholarship which is demanded from the candidate for the Bachelor's degree at either university, is far inferior to that which is required at our own institutions. The student at Cambridge\* must reside but twelve entire months out of the four years within the university, during which he must attend two recitations daily; and when the four years are completed, he must pass an examination in the first six books of the *Æneid* and of the *Iliad*, in *Euclid* and *Plane Trigonometry*, in *Paley's Philosophy and Evidences*, and in *Locke on the Human Understanding*. The student at Oxford† must reside twenty-one months within the university, and he will be entitled to the same degree, if he passes an examination

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\* Griffin's Remains, II, 256.

† Huber's English Universities, translated by Newman, II, 523.

in Logic, on the Thirty-nine Articles, in the general history of the Bible, in the four Greek Gospels, and in four classical authors\*—two Greek and two Latin—which are to be previously selected by himself, and if he can also translate English into Latin without gross inaccuracy. Such is the scholarship requisite for admission to the Bachelor's degree, and about two-thirds of the whole number graduated at each university attain no higher standard. The remaining third, and this includes all those who receive the "honors," must pass a far severer ordeal—an ordeal which but a small minority of the first third of the graduates of any American college could ordinarily endure. These honors are given however at Cambridge exclusively to superior scholarship in pure and mixed mathematics, as this is the only branch of science in which the candidate is examined; while the similar examinations at Oxford have been almost entirely confined, until within the last twenty years, to the Greek and Latin languages and literature. Such is the scholarship, such the course of instruction and study for the undergraduates, at these two celebrated universities. Each of them has its long list of professors, not a few of whom are eminent men; and of these professors, one half in Cambridge, and rather more than one fourth in Oxford, deliver public courses of lectures—courses which include from twenty† to thirty hours in a year. Attendance on these lectures is however purely voluntary, and is usually given by but very few, and no professor ever takes part as such in the personal instruction of the students, a duty which

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\* Of three lists of such authors, given by Newman as examples, the following may be considered the most difficult:—Twelve books of the Iliad, Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, Annals of Tacitus, and the *Æneid*.

† *Huber's Eng. Univ.*, II, 477.

falls exclusively in each of the various colleges on the tutors.

It is then difficult to perceive what just claim either Oxford or Cambridge can advance to the name of a school of science, in the proper signification of the term. One is mainly a school for the student in the classics, and the other is mainly a school for the student in mathematics, and sound scholarship in both may be acquired at either university. A considerable number of the Fellows of the various colleges are doubtless learned men in a more general sense, having traversed not merely one, or two, but many walks in the broad domain of science. But if we confine our survey to the three hundred young men who are annually made Bachelors at Oxford, and to the three hundred and fifty who receive the same degree at Cambridge, can we form any other estimate? It may be that, so far as the study of mathematics should be pursued, both as a fundamental element of knowledge and as a process of intellectual discipline, Cambridge deserves all the reputation she has maintained for the last century and a half. It is also unquestionable that, as the result of long previous drilling at the schools of Eton, Harrow and Westminster, not a few young men at Cambridge, and more than one third of those at Oxford, are made what would be deemed at our own colleges very superior classical scholars. Yet it is doubtful whether the classical standard which has been long adopted at either university, is not essentially defective; whether the shell of literature is not often as much valued by the student and the teacher as the kernel. If we may credit the statements of both the friends\* and the enemies of these in-

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\* Prof. Sedgwick's Discourse on the Studies at Cambridge, p. 37. *Edinb. Rev.*, Oct. 1809; Art. 3.

stitutions, an accurate knowledge of prosody and of the art of writing Latin verses is held in almost equal honor with all other classical attainments. To give a false quantity to a line of Pindar or of Euripides, or a wrong accent when translating a sentence of Polybius or Livy, is reputed as gross a blunder as a stupid mistranslation. The tenacity of a school-boy's memory is thus rated as high as a nice discrimination of different shades of thought, and as felicity in translation. Surely such a standard can not be favorable to thorough scholarship, for the first rate critic in Greek metre, if such is his chief excellence, is little better than a classical fop. The great value of every language, ancient and modern, consists in its being the vehicle of thought; and the usefulness of the study of the Greek and Latin languages, aside from the consideration that they are primary elements in the formation of our own tongue, evidently consists in these two particulars,—that thought is there expressed with extraordinary precision and beauty, and that the transfusion of such thought from one language into another, is, in itself, one of the best processes of mental discipline. Where then it is accounted scarcely more thorough scholarship to be able to transfuse the very life of the Prometheus Vincetus or of one of the Philippics of Demosthenes into our vernacular tongue, than to write decent iambic verses, or to decide what words in Homer admit the Digamma, what can be said, but that the great high schools and universities of England largely confound classical literature with its trappings and tinsel?

We may then repeat the remark, that neither of the English universities can be properly termed a school of science. They have many scientific men, and science can be acquired within their walls, but their course of instruc-

tion is not scientific. With all their venerable antiquity, their vast endowments, their rolls of the mighty dead and of the illustrious living, and resting as they do on the pillars of the throne, the peerage, and the established church, they do not invite their young men to become scientific scholars. On the contrary, two thirds of those who are sent forth wearing the baccalaureate honors, have learned them by making the attainments of a school-boy; and the acquisitions of the remainder, however respectable, have been gathered almost wholly from the walks of mathematics and classic literature.

What then, it may here be asked, is the real, ultimate aim of this system of training? What are the specific form and hue which are there intentionally given to the English mind? The answer, if I mistake not, is this. Oxford and Cambridge are the two great schools of the polished and the intelligent young men of England,—the young men who are to sustain the established church, the peerage, the crown, and all the other ancient institutions of that kingdom. They are not sent thither primarily to become scientific or profoundly learned; but to acquire as much learning as is demanded by the standard of the English divine, the English statesman, the English lawyer, the English physician, and the English country gentleman. This standard may in some respects be high, very high; it may in others be low; but this is the university standard of education. They are to be well educated, they are to be gentlemen, they are to be manly and honorable, they are to have the graceful polish of literature, and all this is to be grafted on the sound common sense of the English mind. When they have been thus moulded, the university has done its work. A considerable number, also, and these are principally included among the fellows of the



respective colleges, are to become thorough scholars—not indeed in the course of university instruction, but by their own efforts; but they are to become thorough scholars in the English and not in the European import of the term. Such, as it would seem, is the design of this system of training, and this design is accomplished admirably well.

The charge of presumption may be here made against me for such remarks respecting these universities; and as I would not appear to merit such an accusation, I would ask if the statements already made concerning their courses of instruction and study, etc.—statements, on which full reliance may be placed, are not my justification? Can such a system of training with any propriety be styled scientific? Whatever polish and pliancy and nerve it may impart to the youthful student, is not its compass obviously narrow? It is no reply to such queries to affirm, that it fits young men well, and that no other system could fit them so well for their entrance upon active life in England; and that the statesmen, the country gentlemen, the divines, the lawyers of that country, are not equalled by the same classes in any other country. Whether such assertions are or are not true, affects not the nature of this system of public education. I would also reply that these views are virtually but a repetition of what is now affirmed by great numbers in England, and by not a few within the very walls of these universities. This is not a question between Edinburgh and Oxford, or between dissenters and the established church. It is discussed by men of all parties, by churchmen and by dissenters, by those within and those without the college halls.\* The number of those who demand changes in study and discipline, it

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\* Huber's Eng. Univ. I, Editor's Preface, *passim*; II, 337-403.

would seem; is increasing, and the circle of those who resist these demands is lessening. And the changes which have been actually made within these institutions during the last forty, and especially the last twenty years, may be deemed an admission that many of these demands are just. I would also ask, Does not the literary history of England for the last forty years establish the justness of these remarks? The English mind is doubtless equal in its inherent vigor to that of any other nation modern or ancient, and the English press has been teeming for the last half century with new works in every department of knowledge. But am I putting a query which can be instantaneously answered, when asking, What are the great additions which these universities have made within the same period to the amount of human knowledge? Has England been foremost for the last fifty years in mathematics, in the natural sciences, in metaphysics, in history, philology, and criticism, or in most departments of the arts? Who are the great English theologians of this period? Who their lawyers, that have been profound in law as a science, or who in other words have ever thoroughly studied it, except as an insular and artificial system? Or to be still more specific; why is it that every standard edition of the classics which has been issued from the *Oxford* press for the last twenty years, has been the work of a German scholar; or what real contributions to grammar, to metre, or to correcting the text of the classics, have been made during the same period by English scholars? All these queries, it is believed, must receive the same answer, and an answer different from that which may be often given by the German and the French scholar,—an answer also, which the English scholar would not be con-

strained to give, had Oxford and Cambridge been European instead of insular universities.

The excellence of the English university system rests not then on its furnishing a thorough scientific education; this is neither its avowed nor its real design. It fits the sons of the aristocracy and hundreds also from other classes, annually, for an entrance upon active life in England; each to take the sphere which is then assigned to him, or to force his way to a still higher one by his own intense efforts, in the most artificial state of society which exists on earth. The standard, whether elevated or low, has been graduated for England alone: the tutor instructs, and the pupil studies, usually with no other aim.

The *German* system will be next considered. And no two students differ more in appearance and temperament than the English and the German. The training of the latter is begun in one of the hundred gymnasiums of his own country, where he is so minutely and thoroughly drilled for five or seven years, that he is then prepared to enter some one of the fourteen universities of Protestant Germany, a far better classical scholar than are most of the graduates of our American colleges. In one of these gymnasiums the foundations of all his future scholarship are laid, and they are probably the best classical schools, if not also the best scientific schools generally, in the world. German scholarship, whether in the youth or in the full grown man, is never superficial; it has no short and easy road to reputation, the boy is made literally to know what he is taught, and his knowledge becomes a part of the very substance of his mind. When he leaves the gymnasium for the university at an age usually equalling that of one half of our graduates, he is supposed no longer to need the tuition of an instructor.

The previous course of prescribed study, with its daily recitations, is then finally abandoned, and the knowledge which he is now to acquire, is to be gathered either in his private studies or from the lectures of the professors. Thus made his own master, one of his first acts of self-government may be that of joining the university *Landsmannschaft* of his own native province or duchy, and he is thus constituted one of the *Burschen*. And the genuine, full blooded Bursch, is an anomaly out of Germany. The docile youth of the gymnasium has lost none of his literary ardor, he is the same patient, and as he is sometimes slightly termed, the same plodding student as before, but on his solid stock of scholarship he has perhaps now grafted the wild slips of a German Bursch. These are to grow luxuriantly for three years, the term of his university course of study, and they are then to be lopped off, never to revive. You may see him strolling along the streets of Jena or Göttingen, wearing a beard that refuses acquaintance with the razor, his matted locks hanging on his shoulders, his enormous jackboots, armed with pound-spurs, clattering on the pavement, and enveloped in a cloud of tobacco smoke from his pipe of five feet in length. He is as unlike the young Englishman of Oxford or Cambridge in his reverence for the past, as he is in personal appearance. A German student lives in the present, or in the hazy visions of the future, for the *genius loci* of his university may be of quite modern origin. He enters no splendid chapels, he lives in no quadrangular hall, he sees no ancient rooms adorned with busts and pictures of the illustrious dead, where senates annually meet to confer the "honors" on the successful candidates. The university, so far as it meets the eye, is seen only in its vast library, its lecture rooms, and in the persons of

its thirty, or fifty, or seventy professors. These learned gentlemen, and they are the most learned men of Germany, deliver lectures on almost every branch of literature and science, and each student attends on just such courses of lectures, and for as long a period, as he may choose. This is the only mode of university instruction, public or private courses of lectures. As has been previously remarked, all the tutorial drilling of the student at the recitations of the gymnasium, and every prescribed routine of study are now disused as no longer necessary. The immense library of the university contains all the works which he may need for reference; he may employ a private teacher in any particular branch, but all the public instruction which he receives, is given him in the lectures of the professors in one or more of the four faculties. And these lectures are generally admirable productions. For thorough learning and nice discrimination on every subject connected with classical and oriental literature, and with civil law, it is no disparagement to the sound scholars of other countries to affirm, that they are very rarely equalled. These lectures, with their copious references, the student transfers at the time of delivery, so far as is practicable, into his note-book, and he thus gathers up for years the fruits of this varied talent and learning. Nor are his perseverance and ardor usually intermitted during his entire course. Unlike the English student, the German is ordinarily poor or possessed of but a bare competence; he has neither money nor time which he can afford to squander. His application is German application, and what this is needs no explanation. Such is the process by which the young German is trained up for professional or for public life at the gymnasium and the university.

From the descriptions already given, it is evident that a comparison of the German with the English system must be difficult. The celebrated schools of Eton, Harrow and Westminster, in England, are somewhat similar to the gymnasiums of Germany; but neither Oxford nor Cambridge has much resemblance to the universities of the latter country. The course of instruction and study at the English university is in most respects but an advancement upon that of these preparatory schools; at each the student is considered as strictly a pupil who needs the daily tuition of his instructor. His university undertakes not to prepare him for any one of the learned professions. This is a subsequent matter with which she has no concern, all that is there done is to lay the foundations on which the structure may be afterwards erected. But the German youth leaves his state of pupilage at his entrance into the university. There, as if admitted a freeman into the great field of universal science, he pursues self-directed his own path of knowledge. He daily hears, and he all but transcribes the learned disquisitions of his favorite professors, but he is still his own teacher and guide. Under these influences he is now training himself for some public post, for the law, or for medicine, for the ministry, or for a future professorship. Were the English student already engaged in his professional studies, there would be more of a similarity in their positions, although the diversity would be still wide.

But we can compare the effects of these two different systems, we can notice the mental habits which they appropriately form, and can thus, partially at least, decide on their relative merits. I would observe then, that, while the English universities are not schools of general science, and the German universities are such schools, the distinc-

tion seems to be rather speculative than practical, so far as it affects the student himself. How is the student in theology at Göttingen or Berlin benefited by the circumstance, that he may also attend courses of lectures in law, or medicine, or philosophy? True, he is a member of a renowned university, but all its usefulness for him consists in its faculty of theology alone. To him it is a theological school and nothing besides, and he would be none the loser were its other three faculties, with their thirty or forty professors, to be transferred to some distant institution. The superiority of a university to a college, when the latter is adequately endowed, consists not in the fact that the student at the former can more thoroughly explore any single department of learning, but that a university can be sustained at less expense than four or five distinct colleges and professional schools, and that the celebrity of the former will allure the greater number of students. Neither is the German system of instruction by lectures to be deemed so great an advance in the art of communicating knowledge. The student is never questioned by the professor during the delivery of the entire course, but he is permitted to bear away with him as much of each lecture as his memory and note-book can retain. In such a process the mind becomes little else than a mere receiver. There is no collision of intellects, no solution by the instructor, of difficulties started by the mind of the student, no frequent inculcation of fundamental principles. The lecture, whether replete with learning and the soundest criticism, or a mere speculative disquisition, is addressed equally as an *argumentum ad verecundiam* to the student. Whatever then the advantages of this mode of teaching, it is obvious that it may be easily rendered the medium of communicating more

undigested knowledge, more useless speculation, more positive error, than all other modes whatever. Perhaps we may here find the explanation of some of the most marked peculiarities of German literature for the last half century. The national mind is usually described as practical and stable, as possessing the attributes which were so fully developed in him whom we may style Germany's noblest son—Martin Luther. But these are not the characteristics of the literary mind of Germany. Its fecundity in every department is truly wonderful, for never was the wise man's saying so constantly verified, "of making many books there is no end,"—the annual catalogue of their titles only forming a thick octavo volume. But never was such heterogeneity seen as in the works that are yearly sold at the Leipsic fair. There is patient research, there is learning, there is ingenious disquisition, each without measure; and there is also endless diversity, nay contrariety, on almost every subject whatever. In the exact sciences and in those which are in a measure arbitrary—such as municipal law, the wildest speculator can move only in fetters; but in all others it would seem that most of the German scholars select, individually, their own path, regardless of all that have been previously trodden. As a mere classical or biblical critic, the German scholar takes precedence of the English; but when he has once passed the region of grammar and of nice criticism, the former may move in an orbit whose elements admit not of calculation. If the lectures of university professors are to diffuse the only light, how shall the student shape his course on the troubled sea of German theology, or of German metaphysics? Eichhorn follows Michaelis, and De Wette succeeds Eichhorn: Paulus descends below Semler, and Strauss sinks into depths far lower still: Tholuck,



when at Berlin, moves in conjunction with Neander, and when at Halle, in opposition to Gesenius. There is such a reality as theological truth, and the English or the American student usually takes but one path when seeking her abode; but for the German student her home is now on the surface, and now in the clouds, and now—where the old proverb places her—in the bottom of a well.

Neither is the German student guided by a more steady light through the regions of metaphysical philosophy. What was a *terra incognita* twenty years since, may have been for the past five years all mapped out as a thoroughly explored and conquered domain. But ere ten more years elapse, the present recognized boundaries will be so confounded with later divisions, that to any but a German eye, “shadows, clouds, and darkness,” will seem to rest over the whole territory. Scarcely any professor now lectures as a follower of Kant, who, half a century ago, reigned undisputed. The sway of Fichte, who succeeded Kant, has also long since passed away. Jacobi, whose supremacy was next acknowledged over a portion of Germany, still retains some adherents. But Schelling, a still younger metaphysician, was bent on occupying the throne, and as the Germans saw fit to pronounce Schelling their “deepest and sharpest thinker,” his star was next in the ascendant. And now, as if the principle of “rotation in office” were no more the law for tide-waiters, and post-masters, and secretaries in the United States, than for philosophers in Germany, Hegel has been employed for the last fifteen years in wresting the sceptre from Schelling—the latter still contending, for the struggle is not yet ended, for his very life.

Whatever then the explanation, a German university, unlike those of England, exerts no stable, permanent

influence over the majority of its students. Great attainments are indeed made, the perseverance is worthy of all praise; but the mind is in a state of constant transition. Numberless ideas are accumulated, while but few fundamental principles are adopted. The English student, although an offset from the same old Teutonic stock, is constitutionally stable, and his university renders him more stable. His scholarship, if less critical and thorough in the classics, is sounder in mathematics, and often also in modern science, if he once enters its varied walks. His acquisitions, if not more consciously those of knowledge, are often more closely retained in subsequent life, because he prizes them more for their own sake. It is difficult to resist the conviction that the German usually acquires knowledge, simply as a means to an end. The skillful critic or theologian handles his weapons admirably, but the contest is waged for victory rather than truth. Knowledge is valued, if I mistake not, for its own intrinsic worth, more in England than in Germany.

It should be also remarked, that the German system of training exercises no moral restraints upon the student. Neither the university nor its professors assume any responsibility here. He may, at his admission, be required to pledge himself by the signature of his name, that he will obey the laws; that he will not fight a duel, nor join any secret society. Should he be subsequently detected in some gross act of insubordination, he may be confined for a few days in the university prison—for every university has its prison—or, if guilty of some flagrant crime, he may be expelled. These however are mere regulations of police, so intended, and so understood by every student. As moral restraints, they have no influence. And but few, if any, of the German universities, it is supposed,

can be recommended as schools of morals. An English university, if I rightly apprehend its influence, affords an atmosphere not unhealthy to the young man who enters its walls with a reverence for virtue and religion. The idle and the vicious, whether the sons of the aristocracy or from other classes, can easily break through every restraint, and with impunity, if not flagrant in their misconduct.

In proceeding to notice the *American* system of training there are difficulties which attend neither of the preceding divisions of the subject. Some indeed may question the propriety of the term—the American system, under the persuasion that no single specific mode of training has been generally adopted in our colleges. These institutions, it may be said, are as diverse from each other in their foundations, in their courses of tuition and study, and in their discipline, as are the English and the German. Such a diversity doubtless exists, and were we to include in our survey all those institutions which their respective founders or which legislatures have chosen to style colleges and universities, we could speak with but little precision. By the American system I intend, as every alumnus present well understands, that mode of training which has been adopted in most of the older and established colleges in this country, and especially in New England. This has been long practised, its features are distinct, and it has secured general approbation. I would also observe that, while the collegiate system of New England generally will be noticed, there will be also a constant reference to that which has been so long successfully maintained at Yale.

No such institutions as the English and the German universities exist in New England, or in the United States.

Oxford and Cambridge are each a collection of distinct, though associated colleges, Oxford having twenty four, and Cambridge seventeen, and each of these latter is in itself a complete institution. Still less is the resemblance between a German university and one of our own seminaries. The former is the union of four great professional schools, or faculties, of theology, law, medicine, and philosophy, while a New England college in the structure of its academical department is not radically unlike a German gymnasium. Yale, as well as Harvard, has its three professional schools in connection with its proper collegiate department, and Harvard has long borne the title of university, but it is as colleges simply that we are to notice these institutions. The position of the student at Oxford or Cambridge, if he is considered merely as a member of his own particular college, and not of the university, is not unlike that of the American student, but there is scarcely any similarity between the German institutions and our own. In comparing our own system of training with the English and the German, it is then obvious, that we must aim rather at general results than at a course of details.

The assertion may not soothe our self-complacency, but I suppose it to be undoubtedly true, that the English student enters one of the colleges at Oxford or Cambridge ordinarily far better prepared than the youth who is received into one of our own institutions. Eton, Harrow, Westminster, and Rugby, are national schools, and lads are there drilled for years by the ablest masters, into such a knowledge of Greek and Latin as is rarely attained in any of our academies or grammar schools. This is the foundation, and they lay it deep and broad in England and in Germany; and we, in our superior wisdom, often

begin to build the house before the foundation is half completed. Probably a moiety of the New England students enter their respective colleges, scarcely more than half fitted. Some cannot afford a longer time, others have not the means, others still persuade their parents that time enough has been spent in preparation, and all apparently believe that, whatever the deficiency, it will be compensated by supererogatory attainments at college. And as the frequent result, no small part of the first two years is occupied with still laying the foundations; the building indeed after a time ascends, but slowly, often ill-proportioned, and of very frail materials. Here, as I suppose, commences the radical defect in the American system of training—a defect not chargeable upon the officers of our colleges, and which none have more pointedly exposed than themselves, but which is often remediless through the entire subsequent course. What costs in England six or eight years' constant study, and drilling by a succession of the best masters, must be here usually acquired in three, if not in two years, under a single teacher—perhaps competent, perhaps of but a journeyman's skill. A youth of sterling talents and unconquerable perseverance will, in himself, surmount even greater difficulties; but many a parent has ultimate reason to thank the college instructor that his son, thus half-trained, does not leave the institution a contented blockhead, or hopelessly broken down in spirit. The remedy for this great evil, to be effectual, must be applied where the evil itself begins. Teaching must become as distinct and substantive a profession as divinity or law or medicine, and this will be done whenever the community gives it what it intrinsically deserves—equal honor. Why should the professional teacher be less respected than the merchant

or the lawyer? In cultivation of intellect he usually excels the one, while he equals the other; and in usefulness does he not commonly equal, and often exceed, either? My younger brethren, you especially have the power to accomplish much here. We have all learned from experience, that the boy can as little learn to make a railroad progress in scholarship, as can the infant in walking: let your sons then in future years be sent to Yale, thoroughly fitted.

When the youth has become a member of one of our colleges, he enters on a course of study more extended and scientific than that which is pursued at Oxford or Cambridge, or at a German gymnasium. This is undoubtedly the case in most of the New England institutions, and also in some others, and it has been probably long the case at Yale. One explanation of this inequality may perhaps be found in the circumstance, that the English universities require so short a period of actual residence as the condition of a degree,—Cambridge requiring but twelve months, and Oxford but twenty-one, out of the four years; while in our own colleges, thirty-six months out of the four years are usually occupied with study. Another explanation would seem to be this,—that the ordinary college course is deemed in England a subordinate matter, and that the great stress is placed on the additional studies which the candidates for “honors,” who constitute one third or more of the whole number, pursue under private tutors. But whatever the explanation, the American course of study is the more scientific of the two. And if the student enters on it well prepared, is it doubtful whether it is preferable to the English? Let such a youth who has attained sixteen years—and this age is usually sufficiently early—commence his first

year's studies in this college, and then faithfully pursue the three years' course which consists mainly of the classics and the mathematics, and he will have laid the proper basis for all subsequent acquisitions. Here, as really as in England or in Germany, the scholar is formed on the foundations of mathematics and the learned languages; no pillars, dug from the quarries of ancient or modern learning, compare in strength or beauty with these. And when his fourth year arrives, the new course of study then pursued is not a mere graceful appendage. A third pillar, of as fair proportions and of equal stability, is now fixed by the side of the first two; and on their united strength any subsequent structure, however lofty, will securely rest. If the American system is comparatively defective in the classics and mathematics, so that the first third of our graduates must be pronounced inferior to those of the corresponding rank at Oxford in the one branch, and at Cambridge in the other, they are superior to those of England and Germany in the third great branch of studies. The dead languages are to be studied as one form of mental discipline, mainly for the purpose of learning how to use our own language with the greatest perspicuity and force; and mathematics are to be pursued as a similar discipline, because it is the science of rigid demonstration. Neither can be ever superseded or made secondary in a system of sound education, until men shall discover that the pyramid is to be built with its base above and its apex below. But still another process of discipline is equally necessary,—that which fits the mind to reason justly on moral and metaphysical subjects, and on the other great practical interests of life. Strict demonstration, as such, has very little connection with such subjects. Instead of reasoning from contradictions

or absurdities, which is the province of mathematics, the mind is to compare analogies, to weigh opposing arguments, and to decide according to the preponderance of evidence. The mere mathematician is here often consciously at fault, and the mere classical scholar is little better than a critic on words and sentences ; neither will their combined powers be sufficient, but a third process of culture is indispensable. This is secured in our own country, and particularly at Yale, by the studies of the fourth year. In this list are included Logic, Mental and Moral Philosophy, Natural Theology and the Evidences of Christianity, Political Economy, and the elements of international and constitutional Law. These are the elements of all metaphysical and moral science, and no young man can be deemed well educated who has not to some extent successfully studied them. The American system, I would repeat it, is preferable here.

In two other important branches, one of which is scientific, the student at our colleges is generally superior. Chemistry, with its kindred departments of mineralogy and geology, is a broad field of science, nor is it less the constant minister to the arts ; and when taught as it is at Yale, both in its principles and by experiment, its importance can be scarcely overrated. And in the skillful and prompt use of his native language, whether in written composition or in oral disputation, the American student probably exceeds the English, if not also the German.

Were the sum of the preceding remarks to be now expressed, it would be as follows. The English system of college training usually succeeds a course of far more thorough drilling than the American. Oxford gives more of the husk and more of the fruit of classical learning, and Cambridge gives more knowledge of mathematics, to



those hearts are silent, those hands are dust! Our subject for the brief hour has been college studies and discipline; but we are all receiving lessons from higher than earthly teachers,—we are daily undergoing a discipline which is forming us, consciously or unconsciously, for eternity. Misspent college hours may be, at times, replaced by subsequent diligence; but a misspent life, a lost probation, who can ever repair! Our exit from these peaceful halls has proved to each of us but an entrance upon the world's changeful, and often stormy scenes. May divine grace so order our remaining days, that our exit from earth shall be but an introduction to the rest of the blessed!